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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND ALDERMAN BALCER INTRODUCE ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING FIRST-
EVER VETERAN'S PREFERENCE BID INCENTIVE ON CITY CONTRACTS**

Innovative Program Will Increase Opportunity for Small and Veteran-Owned Businesses

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Alderman James Balcer, 11th Ward, introduced the City's first veteran's preference bid incentive today in City Council. This initiative will create more opportunities for participation in City contracts by small local businesses, including certified minority and women-owned businesses (MBEs and WBEs) and veteran-owned businesses.

"We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude for their brave service to our country; creating a veteran's preference bid incentive is one way to help them succeed once they come home," said Mayor Emanuel. "This ordinance reflects a policy change that will help ensure that veteran-owned businesses are represented in government contracting."

This is the first-ever program to create opportunities for veteran-owned businesses on City contracts. This ordinance is expected to foster partnerships between small local businesses (many of which are also certified MBEs or WBEs) and veteran-owned businesses in the form of joint ventures, by awarding a 5 percent bid incentive off the contract base price to such joint ventures.

"Creating additional opportunities for our veteran-owned businesses in Chicago honors their service to our great country," said Alderman Balcer. "Increasing their participation in City contracts reflects our values and will help our small local businesses."

Veteran-owned businesses and other small local businesses, which include City and County certified MBEs and WBEs, will benefit with increased opportunities for business growth and increased participation in City contracts.

This announcement is the latest in a series of efforts made by Mayor Emanuel to increase opportunities for small businesses, MBEs and WBEs. Since taking office, the Emanuel Administration has launched:

- The MBE/WBE mentor/protégé program, which is designed to foster improved economic opportunity for MBE and WBE businesses throughout Chicago by offering up to five percentage points of MBE or WBE credit for contractors that agree to take on a mentor/protégé relationship with an MBE or WBE firm.

- The Graduation Phase-Out Program, which allows MBEs and WBEs that have exceeded the program's size standards to continue to participate for a period of three years to gradually exit the program, with 75 percent credit allowed in year one, 50 percent in year two and 25 percent in year three.
- The Small Business Initiative, which encourages small businesses to participate in City funded construction projects. The program is exclusive to small businesses and is limited to construction projects that are under \$3 million in total cost.
- The Diversity Credit Program, which allows private sector firms who also bid on public work to obtain up to five percent M/WBE utilization credit on a City contract for work performed by a certified firm on one or more of the prime's private sector contracts.

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